



NCBS Logo with Carolina Blue by Dempsey Essick

Bluebird Notes

PUBLISHED BY
The North Carolina Bluebird Society
www.ncbluebird.org



NCBS is an affiliate of NABS.

March through May 2010

Volume 25 Issue 2

North Carolina Bluebird Society Mission Statement

Our goal is to support activities that foster the resurgence of bluebirds and other cavity nesting birds in our home areas.

Inside this issue:

<i>Bluebird Tales</i>	2-3
<i>NCBS 2010 Annual Meeting</i>	4-5
<i>Birds Roasting at night</i>	7
<i>NCBS 2009 Survey Comments</i>	8-10
<i>Bluebird Friends</i>	11
<i>Flying Squirrels</i>	12-13
<i>NCBS Membership & Contribution Page</i>	14
<i>Lake Benson Park Monitors</i>	15

NCBS 2010—Garner Senior Center



The NCBS Annual Meetings are never held in the same place two years in a row. As a result, each meeting has its own characteristics, its own ambiance. 2010 was held and sponsored by the Garner Senior Center and coordinated with activities at the White Deer Park as part of Earth Day celebrations. Dr. H. Douglas Pratt, Research Curator

of Birds for the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences in Raleigh, became an illustrator of birds more by happenstance than design. He spoke to us on "Illustrating Nature: My Life at the Interface of Art and Science." An illustration he once submitted to an art contest was considered not to be art. Much of his work was done in Hawaii which resulted in his book, "*The Hawaiian Honeycreepers: Drepanidinae*." He summed up his many accomplishments by saying that "Being an illustrator made one a better scientist and being a scientist made one a better illustrator."

Check out his website to fully appreciate his many interests and contributions. <http://www.hdouglaspratt.com/> His illustrations are of birds from all over the world. He smilingly said that he had added as many Bluebirds illustrations as possible to his presentation just for the benefit of this annual meeting of NCBS.

Dr. Lynn Siefferman's topic of "Plumage Coloration and Personality in Eastern Bluebirds" might have been renamed "Sex and the Bluebird." She has been studying a flock of bluebirds in Alabama and North Carolina since 1999. Taking advantage of the bluebirds' use of nest boxes, Lynn is able to keep track of over 200 boxes with their banded bluebird occupants. The blue color of bluebird feathers is not the result of a pigment but is produced by the scattering of light caused by the microscopic structure of the feather barbs. The Eastern Bluebird's color intensity is affected by its environment, such as the amount and quality of food it has access to and the number of its fellow hatchlings in the nest. Anything that puts the bird in sub-optimal conditions results in duller color. The more colorful males are better able to secure nesting boxes and are not challenged for the boxes by the duller males. The brighter guys may use color to show their toughness so they're not messed with. More colorful males mate earlier and with females who have more and healthier offspring.



The females may look to color as a determination of a male's success to function in the world. More colorful males tend to be less aggressive than the duller birds. These comments were taken from her talk and her website: <http://today.appstate.edu/bluebirds/> Bluebirds, the symbol of happiness, are much more complicated in their sexual drive to reproduce.

Bluebird Notes

Issue 24 Vol. 4

Ray Welch— 2012 President
Co-Chair County Coordinator Program
(336)-764-0226
president@ncbluebird.org

Jim Jochum – 2011 Vice-President
(336) 288-7975
Director-jj@ncbluebird.org

Bob Wolk-2012 Recording Secretary
(919)848-4812.
secretary@ncbluebird.org

David Hindsley –
2010 Recording Chair
recordingchair@ncbluebird.org

Kay Hindsley –
2012 Corresponding . Secretary
(252) 823-0737
correspondingsecretary@ncbluebird.org

Jimmy Miller—2012 Treasurer
(919) 772-9457
treasurer@ncbluebird.org

Chuck Bliss—2011 Director
Co-Chair County Coordinator Program
(336) 625-5423
cbliss@triad.rr.com

Joye Stephenson—2012 Director
(919) 773-1927 jazinnias@yahoo.com

Glenda Ryan - Director,
Web Administrator (919)-266-0500
webmistress@ncbluebird.org

Christine Ammons – Store Manager
(828)287-3502
storemanager@ncbluebird.org

Helen S. Munro – Editor, Historian
& Past Pres.
(910)-673-6936
editor@ncbluebird.org

Bill Satterwhite—Honorary Director
(919) 787-5248 billsatt@intrex.net



Bluebird Tales



Pictures by

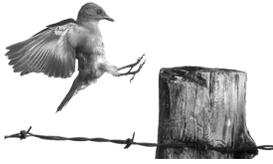
These messages came from Frank Ripp of Whispering Woods, NC. This platform feeder is right outside his kitchen window. I am including the e-mails as they were written to me because each one includes interesting information.

The only Yellow-rump warblers I have ever seen was one killed by running into a window. It is fun to see them in Frank's pictures.

Helen Munro, Editor

1.) The GBBC (Great Backyard Bird Count) is over now, and we got up to 11 Bluebirds on the kitchen window feeder. They love the homemade suet, and don't mind a little bit of Entenmann's Softee (plain cake type) donuts. The Yellow-rumps have sweet beaks, and really love the donuts too.





Bluebird Tales



Frank Ripp

2.) Just a reminder about wire feeders for the suet and squirrels. The squirrels try on these wire feeders, but they can only get very small amounts of the **Homemade Suet**. We got our feeder at Lowes for \$6. Jan Fowler at Sandhills Feed has nicer ones that are coated green for just a few dollars more.

3.) **Until today** we haven't seen more than 2 Bluebirds at the window feeder at the same time (usually a male & female). Today I saw **7 Bluebirds** (mostly males) at the same time on the feeder (Homemade Suet ... of course). Couldn't count the distribution because I was scrambling to get my camera before they disappeared.

Do they know something about the weather?



NCBS Annual



(Above) President Ray Welch welcomes everyone to NCBS 2010. Through his leadership, the By-Laws have been amended, voted upon and passed. This brings them up to date with a change in the permanent address and other minor changes.

(Upper right) Vice-President Bob Wolk talks with speaker Lynn Siefferman. (Below left) Pam Kirby, author of *“What Bluebirds Do”* shows off the bluebird painted by Kay Hindsley.

(Lower right) Beth and Bob Warmuth of Hickory, NC, have volunteered to host NCBS 2011. This was their first



NCBS annual meeting.

(Lower left) Darrell Kirby, Stella Rideout and Bill Satterwhite look over the amazing number of door prizes and silent auction items.

(Lower right) Steve Stone of the America Wildlife Refuge presented a Golden Eagle as part of the Raptor Program at White Deer Nature Center in Garner, NC.



Meeting 2010



(Above) Two NCBS members shared a table with Hank Moss, retired Historian and Director. Hank has served on the Board for at least fifteen years.

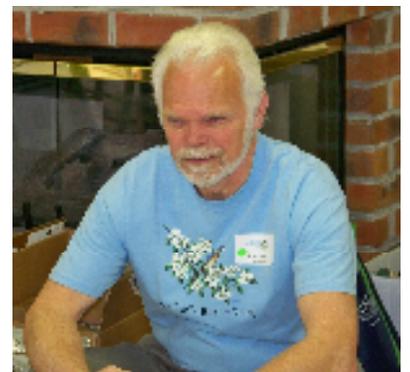
Helen Munro (upper right) unloads a box of *Bluebird Tips* which were distributed to County Coordinators who use them for talks and to put into libraries and bird stores.

(Below left) Bill Satterwhite chats with Kay Hindsley. Kay has opened most of the last fifteen years of annual meetings with her *Bluebird Medley*. Her great voice and enthusiasm gives life to the songs that celebrate the bluebird.

(Below right) David Hindsley, Record Chair, Chuck Bliss, Co-Chair of the County Coordinators, and Jim Jochum, past President and next year's Vice-President, have been active NCBS Board Members for at least 15 years.



Joye Stephensen and Gail Miller (left), and Jimmy Miller (right) along with Bill Satterwhite (above left) were the work force that crafted NCBS 2010. Everything from an outstanding "goody" bag, to coffee, juice and goodies all morning to the delightful lunch by The Forks Cafeteria was superb. The Garner Senior Center's support was fantastic and it was a great bluebird day.





Bluebirds, Inside the Nest Box

Recorded by the Cornell Birdhouse Network

Summer 1999

Produced by the North Carolina Bluebird Society

VHS available for \$15.00 including shipping and handling.

DVD available for \$12.00 including shipping and handling.

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: **NCBS.** SEND ORDER & CHECK TO:

Ms. Christine Ammons, 670 Nanneytown Rd., Union Mills, NC 28167-8762

North Carolina Bluebird Society Products

Description of Item	Cost Postage Included	No. Wanted	Total
Magnets with Bluebird & Dogwood	\$ 4.00	X _____	= _____
Magnets with State Outline/Bluebird	\$ 4.00	X _____	= _____
Bluebird Earrings (pierced)	\$ 7.00	X _____	= _____
Caps with NCBS Logo	\$ 13.00	X _____	= _____
Bluebird Note Cards (12)	\$ 12.00	X _____	= _____
<i>Carolina Blue</i> Tote Bags	\$ 15.00	X _____	= _____
<i>Carolina Blue</i> T-Shirts by Dempsey Essick (S, M, L, XL)	\$ 20.00	X _____	= _____
Lands End blue knitted shirts with NCBS Logo (5 Large, 5 Mediums)	\$ 32.00	X _____	= _____
Cloisonné Bluebird Pins (1inch, 4 colors)	\$ 5.00	X _____	= _____
<i>Bluebirds Forever</i> (12 page booklet)	\$ 2.00	X _____	= _____
3 copies	\$ 5.00	X _____	= _____
<i>On the Wings of a Song—CD</i>	\$ 8.00	X _____	= _____
<i>Bluebirds, Inside the Nestbox</i> DVD	\$ 12.00	X _____	= _____
(DVD special 2 for \$20; 3 for \$30; 6 for \$60)			
<i>Roberta Lee</i> Bluebird Poster 18" x 24"	\$ 12.50	X _____	= _____
Metal Nest Box Tags (10 tags)	\$ 6.00	X _____	= _____
			Total = _____

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: **NCBS.**

SEND ORDER & CHECK TO:

Ms. Christine Ammons, 670 Nanneytown Rd., Union Mills, NC 28167-8762
Prices good through 12/10 **Date of your order is _____**

Thoughts about Bluebirds Roosting at Night

As fall progresses to winter, Eastern Bluebirds in my region begin to make the transition from roosting in trees to roosting more in cavities. We see the same sort of roosting behavior as Andy Brown reported where a family of bluebirds will crowd together in a nestbox.

NOW I am GUESSING they do this more for the safety factor and NOT because they are cold.

When you think about it this makes sense because as the deciduous trees shed their leaves there are fewer and fewer good hiding places for a family of bluebirds or other tree roosting species to hide in the bare limbs of most forest trees. Especially in mixed forests of evergreens and bare limbed hardwoods it would make it relatively easy for an owl to slip through the limbs of scattered evergreen trees in a forest and pick off one roosting bird after another.

Don't forget that sick birds actually snore at night or wheeze when they breathe sometimes. ANY noise that one bluebird in a group makes will bring danger to the whole group. We have kept caged birds for many years and birds actually can have night mares and absolutely go nuts sometimes in a cage late a night. Again this is a death sentence out in the wild.

When birds squat down on a limb or perch the ligaments in their legs automatically tighten up and this makes them tighten up their toes around the limb. When they stand up the ligaments loosen. This simple adaptation helps them hold on to a limb or twig while they sleep. BUT occasionally birds will actually fall off of a perch in the night and then they go thrashing around in the limbs until they find another perch or then end up falling all the way to the ground!

Early in the fall you can watch a whole family of bluebirds go to roost right at dark and sit almost shoulder to shoulder on the same limb but hidden by scattered larger leaves along the limb. This is so that the larger leaves break up the silhouette of their bodies making it harder for an owl to notice them in the dark of the night.

Pine trees would be great roosting spots as scat-

tered pine cones among the needles and branches of these species of trees will look like bird bodies on a starlit night.

It all depends on the predator owls in your area and the species of trees available as to whether or not YOUR bluebirds would be safer sleeping in an old cavity or inside a roost box or just sleeping out on a limb.

I would recommend that if you go out at "dark" to check on what used your nestboxes to roost in that you would WAIT until an hour or two BEFORE sunrise to actually check on what is in the boxes! This way MOST of the predators have already eaten just in case your opening of the nestbox startles a roosting bird so bad that it slams into a tree limb in the dark as it bursts from the box to escape you as it would/could consider you a predator.

This is where the use of a dental mirror quietly slipping into the entrance hole and a weak beam from a flash light can be reflected down into the bottom of the box to see what is in your nestboxes. Nestboxes in parks and other well lit locations with nearby traffic and people and pets walking around at night will condition the bluebirds to sit tight and "freeze" in the nests as they are accustomed to hearing noises from predators all hours of the night!

If you want to check a LOT of the boxes on your trails go out two hours before dark and wedge inside the entrance hole a cut off piece of pine needle that will stick tight across the entrance in the strongest of winds BUT this is something that a bird will readily push through to enter to roost. This way you can walk by the box at several yards distance and see if something has entered the box in the last two hours of daylight.

Game cameras can be set up very close to a nestbox and this will record what is coming and going from the box. There are lots of in-the-box cameras that can be used in roost boxes set up on or near your house.

Keith Kridler Mt. Pleasant, Texas

NCBS 2009

Pinehurst, NC, Edward Bator, Jr. : Although squirrels and snakes have been seen in our yard, none attacked the bird houses. Have maintained two bird houses since 2006, but this is the first year to submit a survey.

Winston-Salem, NC, John Carroll: No predators this year since we have installed stove pipe baffles to prevent snakes and other predators.

West End, NC, Iris & Richard Johnson: Had bluebird, chickadee and titmouse nests. Predator destroyed nests and birds of one titmouse nest—six babies gone.

Union Mills, NC, Louise Keek: It is wonderful to have bluebirds again. I watched over them like they were my babies. I saw two fledge from a Jack Finch box that I will leave up for roosting.

Union Mills, NC, Christine Ammons: The egg count was lower than 2008, but same number fledged with two fewer boxes. Box 8 had 5 eggs, 5 hatched, 5 fledged all three nesting cycles. One box had 1 egg, 1 young, 1 fledged. Do you suppose that one child was spoiled?

Statesville, NC, Sue Ligon: Mockingbirds have invaded my yard, and the bluebirds are gone.

Southern Pines, NC, Jim & Jean Walker: We had flying squirrels invade one nesting box twice and two other nests in 9 boxes once. Raccoons went on a rampage one week and dragged pine needles out of 4 boxes. We installed 6" vent pipe guards on those metal posts. The house wrens have seemed to have found a home on our bluebird trail and are increasing in number of nests each year.

Raleigh, NC, Louise Dail: 1st nesting—Nest started 3-10-09. Cold and pouring rain for several days. Checked on 3-20 and nest had 4 eggs, but no pine straw in the bottom of nest. Consulted "Wild Birds Unlimited" and Bill Saterwhite. Both thought Mom would not be able to incubate the eggs because of dept of nest. She did, however, and 5 eggs hatched (4-05-09). Temperatures continued to go down to the 30s periodically. Babies

healthy and fledge on 4-23-09.

2nd nesting—5-7-09 with 5 eggs. On 5-26, both parents here and feeding babies and then, Daddy disappeared (5-30). Mama was feeding all alone. I observed Mama on 6-7 attempting to feed babies, but flapping her wings at the box. Did not feed babies meal worms. Flew to tree. No ants seen at or in the box. That evening (6-7) Mama was at feeder with her left leg hanging like it was broken. She managed to continue to feed the babies by holding onto the opening of the box and flapping her wings. On 6-12, 4 babies fledged (I found 1 dead (full grown) in nest. Mama fed babies in the trees alone, but none of the babies ever came to the feeder. As of 8-26, Mama came to feeder, but the leg still dangling. This is the same Mama bird who has been coming for 5 or 6 years. She has produced many bluebirds, but doubt she can continue with her injured leg.

Raleigh, NC, Susan Wyatt: one nest attempt had 2 unhatched eggs and 1 dead baby; cause unknown. One other nesting had 1 dead baby, but others were okay. Main problem is that house wrens have overtaken several nest boxes. Boxes out in the open are less likely to have a problem.

Raleigh, NC, Reah Kittelberger: Never had so many checks die in nest. Had 4 dead in 2 boxes. Very unusual.

Liberty, NC, Brian H. Greene: I do't know what happened with one box which had five eggs of which none hatched. The eggs were intact. Possibly something happened to one of the parents or even both of them. Overall I consider getting 16 fledglings from three boxes a pretty successful breeding season.

Jackson Springs, NC, Foxfire Garden Club (Helen Munro):

For the first time in 15 years, a snake ate babies. A snake guard was made and the next brood fledged.

Hickory, NC, Lake Hickory Country Club (Bob Warmuth): Due to confusion with my monitors, we did not get reporting broken down by the nesting period dates on your form. Unfortunately, due

Survey Comments.

to my traveling, I was not able to get the weekly monitoring reports in time to analyze.

We have been working this year to install predator guards on our houses—basically PvC pipe with screens inserted to prevent snakes from reaching houses. Cats seem to be a big problem.

Greensboro, NC, Bur-Mil Park, Wild Birds

Unlimited (Sandra Matthews): One 12 day old hatchling wedged between nest cup and side of nest box. Replaced in nest cup with the other 2. Fledged a few days later.

One nest box with pinkish eggs all three years that I have monitored this trail.

Greensboro, NC, Bryan Park Player's Course, Wild Birds Unlimited (Barbara Haralson):

There were 3 nests with babies dead in the box. No full clutches of eggs unhatched, just the occasional egg left after fledglings leave. Wasps that persisted so that no bluebirds would nest in the box.

One clutch of 4 eggs were all white.

Gibsonville, NC, Cindy Benson, Susan Buchanan, Frances Outhwaite:

Greased poles to fight ants. Several snakes seen on location or suspected. Albino eggs in additional boxes. Two sets of "bomber" parents which were very aggressive. Head protection had to be worn in this area.

Brown-headed nuthatch parent very patient while we fought off ants. There were hornets especially on one empty box. Will bring soap and spray.

One male bluebird found dead and disintegrating on nest.

Again, extreme heat was a big factor in second nesting numbers. On 7/8 found large tortoise scratching dirt in preparation for laying eggs?? Next week all tamped down. No babies seen.

Gibsonville, NC, Pamela Kirby: Have 4 boxes, #1 laid 2 eggs and abandoned because of cold weather. Moved to #2 box and laid 4 eggs. Fight with rat snake and abandoned 4 babies and moved back to Box #1. Male fed and raised 4 babies and we supplemented evening meal. Four fledged. During that time, she laid 5 pink eggs, hatched them and these 5 fledged. During that time, an-

other female built a nest in Box #3, laid 4 eggs.

Raccoon got one egg and trashed the nest. Found 3 eggs and put them back in nest, but she never showed up. Lost those 4 eggs.

Titmouse started in Box #4 and chickadees moved in the day they fledged 7. Six chickadees fledged.

Wren built in camper vents and fledged 5.

The male bluebird had 3 active nests going at the same time!!

Garner, NC, Lake Benson Park (Joye Stephenson):

This was a discouraging season at Lake Benson Park in Garner. Although the Garner Parks' staff replaced and relocated several boxes, we had one fewer fledglings this year than last year.

We had one cup, nest and five nestlings to disappear from the box. They were ready to fledge so hopefully they did fledge before the cup and nest were removed. A few days later, a dead male Bluebird was found in the same nest box apparently killed by another bird, a house sparrow, evidenced by the beginnings of a house sparrow nest a few days later.

Another nest box's door was found open, the cup laying on the ground nearby. The nest was about a foot away and a few blue feathers nearby. These five nestlings were ready to fledge. So we lost 10 Bluebirds which brought our total down.

The Parks and Recreation staff continues to be supportive and are also enjoying the birds and us Bluebirders. They're always ready to help and we enjoy discussing the Park and birds with them.

Four Oaks, NC, Ethelene Allen: There were two occasions to foster out bluebird babies. The first was due to house sparrows who built their nest over the pecked babies. I discovered it in time to rescue the four babies, two died, but two survived and fledged.

Another time I noticed 5 hungry babies were not being fed. I realized the parents were gone. I placed 3 babies with a nest containing 3—all 6 fledged. I placed the other 2 in another box, but they died. I just happened to have others the same age.

(Continued on page 10)

2009 NC Survey Comments

(Continued from page 9)

I had one nest box on an utility pole beside the road about 3 miles from my home. Bluebirds raised 5 babies. I cleaned the box after they fledged. When I drove that way again, the box was gone.

I trapped 47 house sparrows. (*Ed. Note—House Sparrows are non-native and not protected.*)

Fayetteville, NC, Wilbur and Catherine Traylor:

Neighbors had “new” boxes this year and a few looking for nest. Last year (2008) was a poor producer. This year is better, but does not compare to previous years.

Clemmons, NC, Bill Abbey: The nesting season here in Forsyth County delivered some fairly wild weather this summer, but the overall effect on Bluebird nesting seemed inconspicuous.. Fledgling count was inline with that of the past five years.

During the frequent and heavy rains of June, however, there seemed to be an unusual interest among passing waterfowl in some of our bluebird nest boxes.. No takers though.

Charlotte, NC, Rick & Karen Mitchell:

The predator at nest #2 was not identified. We received our *Homes for Bluebirds, Inc.* box as a “house warming” gift in 1995. Our bluebird box has been the home for two or three nestings every year since then. 2009 is the first year that we have lost any eggs or hatchlings to a predator. We have always had a predator guard in place on the pole holding our bluebird house.

Chapel Hill, NC, Lois Herring: Bumble bees chased bluebirds from 3 nests. I left them alone as they are good pollinators.

Cary, NC, Penny Road Elementary (Ann & John Sykes): Eight out of twelve boxes had bluebirds, but also had a Carolina Chickadee nest, House Wren and White-breasted Nuthatch.

Bee infestation in one house. It took us a while to remove bees.

Cary, NC, Carl & Tres Bartels: We put up the

Credit Union Bluebird house at the end of February. The next morning a bluebird appeared at our deck! We did monitor the nest, but missed out on the fledging. Our neighbor said that she heard a lot of birds on morning and the box was empty. She saw the birds in the nearby trees. A few days later a small bird started a nest with lots of little twigs. We were on vacation for a week and when we came back, they had laid eggs. A month later a bluebird appeared, but another small bird flew into the box. We do have bluebirds at our bird bath. Next year we will have a bluebird cup in the nest and will monitor it better.

Bunnlevel, NC, Terry Herndon: I have white bluebird eggs in one area and have had them for years.

I feel that the spraying of my cleared fields planted tobacco is hurting my bluebird yield in the summer months. Several nests were abandoned with eggs in them. If this is a common problem, I will move these boxes.

Apex, NC, Theresa Korab: I was lucky enough to witness the fledglings leave the nest on July 28th. It made my day because I usually just find an empty box.

Asheville, NC, Diane Hankins: It is Feast or Famine!! In 2008– 20 fledged with 3 families in the same box in succession. In 2009—5 fledged, just 1 family with 4 boxes monitored. Asheville had wettest May on record and perhaps this was a factor.

The 5 that fledged left behind the only really dirty nest I’ve seen in 8 years. Remember the article on “fecal blue” some time back? Maybe parents fed too much of the wrong thing.

Greensboro, NC, Jim Jochum: Mockingbird constantly attacked female bluebird at the nest box driving her away from the 5 eggs that didn’t hatch. Four homeowners reported a total of 19 infertile eggs. More this year than last year.

Bluebird Friends

The venue was the Weymouth Center for the Arts and Humanities in Southern Pines, NC. The “great room” of this 1920s Georgian Mansion was filled with adults and children eager to hear about the bluebirds and what they could do to help.

Frances Outhwaite, a long time member of NCBS and Alamance County Coordinator, eagerly shared her thirty year experience of monitoring bluebirds. Her enthusiasm was infectious as she struggled to stay near enough the microphone to be heard and still point out her display containing many different types of nests.

Fran’s love for Weymouth is also at least thirty years old. She has been a writer-in-residence there.

Weymouth was home to the author James Boyd and his family. It is located on 24 acres.

People attending the annual meeting in 2008 enjoyed the warmth of this home. The “Writers-in-Residence Program offers writers

stays of up to two weeks a year to pursue their work. There have been over six hundred residences here, and many writers have said their most creative periods occurred in the tranquil, inspiring atmosphere of the Boyds’ home.” (<http://www.weymouthcenter.org/>)

The audience responded to Fran’s enthusiasm with many basic bluebird questions. Her answers were insightful and she showed the DVD called “*Inside the Nest Box*” which shows the building of a bluebird nest, laying the eggs, hatching the eggs, feeding the babies and the eventual fledging.

Pamela F. Kirby describes her book, “What Bluebirds do” as a love letter to her husband Darrell. While he was fighting a life threatening illness and would be sleeping, she would take pictures of bluebirds. She put these pictures in a notebook with text and gave it to him. His response was that it should be published.

This little book was published by Boyds Mills Press, is now sold in thirteen countries and has won three awards. These include the National Science Teacher’s Association, The American Association for the Advancement of Science and the Burroughs Association.

However, this particular day at Weymouth, it was Pam reading her book while Darrell showed slides of the pages. Pam’s pictures seem to leap from the page as the story of a bluebird pair and their courtship and family unfolds. Pam finishes the book with a description of the three

species of bluebirds, what they do when the weather gets colder, what people can do to help increase the number of bluebirds and how the backyard can become a bluebird habitat. This was an exceptional program by two exceptional women. The audience asked many questions and spent time looking at Fran’s collection that included nests and Plaster of Paris casts of different animal tracks. Pam signed many copies of her book that had been sold by the Country Book Store of Southern Pines. All in all—A Great Day!



Pam Kirby, author of “What Bluebirds Do” and Fran Outhwaite, Alamance County Coordinator, two friends of bluebird and bluebird friends..

Flying

The First Note from Jean Walker:

Hi Helen,

Jim and I are still here at Longleaf. Jim has repaired and stained boxes as needed and all are ready for the season. We had a flying squirrel build a nest in a nearby box, so removed the nest. Less than 2 weeks later, today, we found a completed nest of pink insulation, with a hole in the front in the cup for the mother to get in and give birth to 2 babies.



Now, what are we to do with these babies. Do we kill them as they are predators in the making? (I have no idea where the pink insulation came from as there are no new homes being built near us. Jim and I wonder if the squirrel managed to get in a basement and steal some house insulation.)

This cold winter brought two pair bluebirds back to us to eat our grits mixture. We did not have a single bluebird all last year in our yard!! I'm hoping the bluebirds stay around and nest in our backyard nestbox.

We did have brown headed nuthatches last year and reported the nests to Susan Campbell.

That's my news,
bye, jean walker

Helen's really bad reply:

Dear Jim & Jean,

I have a soft spot in my heart for the flying squirrels. I just put up an extra box and let them have one. They have never taken more than one and if they did, then I wouldn't know what to do.

Helen

Jean's really good reply:

But Helen, your newsletter said they are a

predator of wild birds and we have had them eat the bb eggs. In the past I have taped the box hole with packing tape and taken it to the college gardens where I dumped out the flying squirrel. I did that two times last year.

This is funny- Jim put up an extra box and set the insulation cup/babies in the new box, hoping the mother would find them. He put a new \$2.00 cup in the original box. This morning I checked that box and the squirrel had chewed up the bottom of the NEW cup to begin a new nest!!! We'll have to make a new bottom for this new cup!
jean



Helen needs help from a bluebird expert:

Dear Keith,

I know that flying squirrels (southern in our area) will compete for nest boxes. I assume that they might break the bluebird eggs in taking one over.

Do they eat the eggs or kill the babies?

Just wondering. I noticed your name on one of the pages in the Sialis website.

Thanks. Helen

Keith Kridler's answer:

They will actually eat the eggs, young birds and will kill the adult bluebirds. At one box a single flying squirrel killed an adult bluebird. Three days later it killed a second adult bluebird, then three days later it killed a male House Sparrow.

Flying Squirrels kill more bluebirds than anything else on my trails. They are even worse than House Sparrows. Jack Finch killed every Flying Squirrel he found in his boxes. KK

Editor's Note: Keith Kridler has had more than 50 years experience with bluebirds. My soft spot for flying squirrels has been removed. Isn't it great when we can learn something new? *Helen S. Munro, Editor*

Squirrels

Jean's really good reply:

Dear Helen, yes, you can use my flying squirrel email. Noticed that Keith said Jack Finch killed every flying squirrel that he found. Wonder how he killed them --- and is it legal? I checked the box today and no other nest has been built by the flying squirrel in it. But, there are 2 parents hiding out somewhere. They did not find their nest that Jim moved to another nest box and 2 days later I checked and there were 3 dead flying squirrel babies, so I dumped it all out in the garbage bag. The pink insulation had been padded down so tightly in the bottom of the cup that I had to use a trowel to dig it out. I wonder if I can reuse this cup or if the bluebirds can smell "flying squirrel" in it.???

More from Keith Kridler:

Flying Squirrels are a native predator but they are also protected in many states.

In Texas it is illegal to move almost ANY wild creature from one piece of property and move it and release it to another piece of property. It is even illegal for me to dip up frog tadpoles from our swamp when it is about to dry up and move them to another swamp in Texas or even onto my neighbors property and release them into their pond!

One of our Master Gardeners had a tree blow down and inside it had young flying squirrels about weaned. She called the local Game Warden to have him pick up the young squirrels and take them to a rehabber. The Warden told her he could not do that and when he picked them up he was required to kill them and not relocate them anywhere else in the state. They could only be rehabled and brought back to her yard but he was not allowed to even transport them away from her property to a rehabber... She ended up keeping them illegally, rehabled them and put up a nestbox in their yard on other tree where they still roam around wild at night.
KK

Request sent to Brady Beck, NC Wildlife Resources Commission , about Squirrels and his reply:

Gray squirrels are a game species and are therefore regulated by the Wildlife Commission. They can be harvested during the open season and are subject to bag limits, license requirements, and knowledge of firearm laws near occupied dwellings.

Flying squirrels and bluebirds are natural competitors

for available cavities. When cavities are added for a target species (bluebirds), we need to make sure that they are placed in appropriate habitat and allow for the fact that a competitor may usurp the cavity from time to time. Flying squirrels are not a game animal and there is no hunting season on them, so therefore they cannot legally be killed. The following was quoted from the NC Administrative Code regarding take of other wildlife species.

To summarize, flying squirrels do not damage or destroy property over \$50, and there is not an overabundance of flying squirrels and they do not or present a danger to human safety. The WRC or one of their agents would not be able to issue a permit for depredation by flying squirrels. I would recommend placing bluebird boxes in areas where the habitat is most appropriate, and if you do get a squirrel in a box, put up another one nearby. See <http://www.sialis.org/flyingsquirrel.htm> for more info.

15A NCAC 10B .0106

WILDLIFE TAKEN FOR DEPREDATIONS

(a) Depredation Permit:

(2) Other Wildlife Species. Except as provided in Subparagraph (1, Endangered Species) of this Paragraph, the Executive Director or an agent of the Wildlife Resources Commission may, upon application of a landholder and after such investigation of the circumstances as he may require, issue a permit to such landholder to take any species of wildlife which is or has been damaging or destroying his property provided there is evidence of property damage in excess of fifty dollars (\$50.00). No permit may be issued for the taking of any migratory birds and other federally protected animals unless a corresponding valid U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service depredation permit has been issued.

(3) Special Circumstances. In addition to the circumstances described in Subparagraph (2) of this Paragraph, the Executive Director or his designee may issue a permit to a person or persons for the taking of wildlife resources in circumstances of overabundance or when the wildlife resources present a danger to human safety. Municipalities must first attempt to use the Urban Archery Season to remedy an overabundance of deer before the Executive Director or his designee will issue a depredation permit for deer overabundance.

Brady Beck, NC Wildlife Resources Commission

North Carolina Bluebird Society

NORTH CAROLINA BLUEBIRD SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

North Carolina Bluebird Society Dues:

() 1 Year (\$10.00)

() 3 Years (\$25.00)

Name _____

Address _____

City, State & Zip _____

County _____

Phone # _____

E-mail address _____

I prefer to access the NCBS Bluebird Notes newsletter via the Internet rather than have it mailed to me.

Yes

No

Access information will be sent to the E-mail address you furnished including advance notification of membership expiration.

If you elect to receive the Bluebird Notes newsletter by mail, your Membership Expiration appears on your Mailing Label.

Please complete this form and send it with your check made payable to "NCBS" to:

North Carolina Bluebird Society
ATTN: David Hindsley
135 Lakeview Drive
Tarboro, NC 27886

I am interested in:

- _____ Assisting with the annual meeting
 _____ Serving as a NCBS Board Member
 _____ Helping with the newsletter
 _____ Conducting a bluebird workshop
 _____ Contacting my local paper with news
 _____ Volunteering to be a NCBS County Coordinator
 _____ Other (please explain)
- _____
- _____

Contributions to the Newsletter

Sharing Bluebird information and stories make this an unique publication

Please submit to: Helen Munro, Co-editor
 22 Bobolink Rd. Jackson Springs, NC 27281
 Phone - (910) 673-6936 Fax - (910) 673-7345
 e-mail - hsmunro@ac.net

Slide Programs, Videos and books can be borrowed,
 Please Contact: Hank Moss, Jr.

525 Fairway Drive Southern Pines, NC 28387
 (910) 692-2328 hmjr@nc.rr.com

Bluebird Trail Monitors Wanted Winston-Salem Area

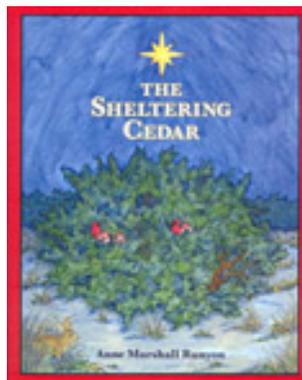
Contact Phil Dickinson

336-659-2464 or pdickins@triad,rr.com

Trail #1 is at the Reynolda House in Winston-Salem near Wake Forest University. There are 15 boxes on this trail.

Trail #2 is in Horizons Park which has Frisbee Golf as well as walking and running trails. It is in north Forsyth County. There are 75 boxes. This would be better done by more than one person.

Both Trails are ready to be enjoyed.



Anne Runyon donated an autographed copy of her book, *The Sheltering Cedar*, as a door prize for NCBS 2010.

The winner of Anne's book was Doris Weiss who will give it to her great-nieces and nephew to enjoy.

Monitors from Lake Benson Park

Annie Runyon is an author of children’s wildlife books and her illustrations appear in the Wildlife in North Carolina magazine. She will have some illustrations for one of the exhibit installations at the new Walnut Creek Wetland Center in Raleigh. Also, the White Deer Park Nature Center which is scheduled to open in Garner this fall will have one of her wild life illustrations on display. Check out these two centers and Annie’s website <http://www.annerunyon.com/>.

Anne is very talented and reporting on what she sees when she monitors is so delightful to read. Anne’s illustration for the Wake County

Libraries is at the bottom of the page.

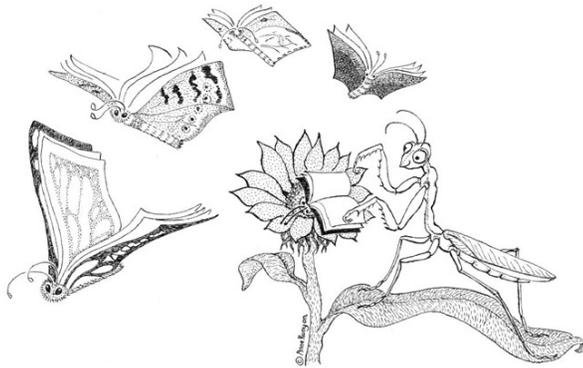
Diane Woerner is a woman of many interests. She is a retired nurse who enjoys the outdoors and wildlife, especially Bluebirds. She is an enthusiastic photographer and has entered one of her photographs in the State Fair this year. She is an active member of the Garner Photography Club. She has made her yard wildlife friend, and has earned the distinction of it being a National Wildlife Federation Certified Wildlife Habitat. She may be retired, but is still very busy with volunteering in her community.

Joye Stephenson, Wake County Coordinator, NCBS

This picture of Anne Runyon (left) and Diane Woerner (right) at Lake Benson Park was taken on March 24, 2010. They monitor 10 boxes.



Gail Wall (left) and Gail Miller (right) was taken March 23, 2010. Jeannie Gail, Gail and Jeannie monitor 6 nest boxes that were installed at White Deer Park this year.



Left—Anne Runyon’s illustration for the Wake County Libraries.

Right—Joye Stephenson, Wake County Coordinator and Jeannie Morin who helps monitor boxes at White Deer Park



Catch the Reading Bug

2008 Summer Reading Program - Wake County Libraries

BLUEBIRD NOTES PUBLISHED BY
THE NORTH CAROLINA BLUEBIRD SOCIETY

135 Lakeview Dr.
Tarboro, NC 27886

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. Postage
P.A.I.D.
Jackson Springs, NC
Permit # 15

Address Service Requested

North Carolina Bluebird Society County Coordinators

ALAMANCE	Fran Outhwaite	(336-226-4770)	ORANGE	Amy Nester	(919-732-4569)
ANSON	Heyward McKinney	(704-694-3240)	PENDER	Mike Plummer	(910-329-1408)
BLADEN	Mike Jackson	(910-863-3839)	PITT	Dr. Edward Davis	(252-756-4165)
BRUNSWICK	Don Adams	(910-454-9856)	POLK	Barbara Rowe	(828-863-4253)
BUNCOMBE	Wendy Herrmann-tross	(828-675-1266)	RANDOLPH	Chuck Bliss	(336-625-5423)
BURKE	Karen Gilliam	(828-437-6772)	ROBESON	Pete Roberts	(910-671-4702)
CARTERET	Ken Roberson	(252-728-4255)	ROCKINGHAM	Houston Pyrtle	(336-349-8311)
CASWELL	Mary Beth Moore	(919-563-2828)	RUTHERFORD	Christine Ammons	(828-287-3502)
CATAWBA	Kristin Dzimitrowicz	(828-324-6956)	STANLY	Richard Griffin	(704-474-4666)
CHATHAM	Lloyd Edwards	(919-837-2468)	SURRY	Bethany Shepherd	(336-352-4455)
CLAY	Carol Reid	(828-837-5807)	SURRY	Rob Halpern	(336-710-0085)
CUMBERLAND	Tom Cain	(910-630-3970)	SWAIN	Karen Jacobs	(828-488-6202)
DAVIDSON	Ray Welch	(336-764-0226)	WAKE	Bill Satterwhite	(919-787-5248)
DURHAM	Jimmy Dodson	(919-796-7308)	WAKE	Joye Stephenson	(919-773-1927)
EDGECOMBE	David Hindsley	(252-823-0737)	WARREN	Stella Rideout	(252-257-3137)
FORSYTH	Bill Abbey	(336-766-5857)	WATAUGA	John Whitley	(828-963-1911)
FRANKLIN	Andrea Lawhorne	(919) 269-6642)	WAYNE	Virginia Pickles	(919-658-3062)
GRANVILLE	Phil Walters	(919-603-0472)	WILKES	Anne Johnson	(336-667-4386)
HARNETT	Patrick & Michael McKinney	(910-893-6006)	PIEDMONT, SC	David Edgerton	(864-947-5310)
HENDERSON	Joe Sanders	(828-651-0920)	YORK, SC	Bill Hilton, Jr.	(803-684-5852)
IREDELL	Joseph R. Taylor	(704-872-7682)			
JOHNSTON	Ethelene Allen	(919-963-3831)	Web-site –	Glenda Ryan	
LINCOLN	Pat Probst	(704-735-5780)		glenda@nc.rr.com or	(919-266-0500)
MCDOWELL	Carol Gilliam	(828-738-0655)	County Coordinator Co-Chair-	Ray Welch	(336-764-0226)
MECKLENBURG	Doug Archer	(704-846-1019)		rwelch5@bellsouth.net	
MONTGOMERY	Don Berrier	(336-461-4457)	County Co-Chair–	Chuck Bliss	(336-625-5423)
MOORE	Helen Munro	(910-673-6936)		chbliss@triad.rr.com	